

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### THE COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The La Jolla Community Planning area consists of approximately 5,718 total acres, including roads, and is located along the western edge of the north coastal region of the City of San Diego. It is bounded on the north by the campus of the University of California, San Diego and a portion of the University community, on the east by Gilman Drive, the University community and Interstate 5, on the south by the community of Pacific Beach and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. East of Interstate 5 are the Clairemont Mesa and University Community Planning areas.

### DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING HISTORY

Two of the earliest planning efforts for La Jolla were conducted by John Nolen in 1906 and later by Charles Eliot in 1946. During that period, La Jolla's residential development was mostly characterized by small, single-family summer cottages that were located along the coastline or interspersed within that portion of La Jolla that is now known as the village, which includes the area within the boundary of Prospect Street, Girard Avenue and Torrey Pines Road. The Eliot Plan was the first comprehensive plan for La Jolla. The plan concentrated on conserving La Jolla as a resort and preserving those features of the community that had attracted visitors and residents to enjoy its natural surroundings.

Over the next twenty years, La Jolla experienced substantial population growth and land development. By 1960, the resident population of La Jolla approached nearly 25,000 persons. Along with this population increase, the demand for housing grew and precipitated the replacement of many existing single dwelling unit cottages with larger-scaled multiple dwelling units. The net result of this growth placed demands on the existing community

infrastructure, its street system, and public utility needs. In addition to this intensification of residential land use, office and small-scale retail development began to spread into areas that were once primarily residential, thereby changing the character and level of pedestrian activity along certain formerly residential blocks.

In 1965, local concern over the overall growth and development of La Jolla stimulated the community to prepare a community plan, and by 1967 the first *La Jolla Community Plan* was officially adopted by the San Diego City Council. The plan proposed broad goals and guidelines for development within the community and set the framework for the precise plans of La Jolla Shores and the Fay Avenue Extension.

The 1967 community plan also sought solutions to the vehicular congestion that occurred on La Jolla's major streets by recommending the construction of new streets into the community (including Torrey Pines Road and La Jolla Shores Drive) and development of new parking spaces. The results of these recommendations on the community adversely affected the level of noise pollution, air quality and pedestrian safety. In order to address these issues, the 1967 community plan was updated and adopted by the San Diego City Council in 1976.

The 1976 *La Jolla Community Plan* proposed limits to the uncontrolled population growth in residential areas by recommending the rezoning of over 125 acres from a high density zone, RM-4-10 (1 dwelling unit per 400 square feet) to RM-3-7 (1 dwelling unit per 1000 square feet) a medium density residential zone. The rezones were approved

by the San Diego City Council in April 1979 which resulted in a reduction in the potential residential population from its expected high of approximately 32,000. The 1976 *La Jolla Community Plan* also sought to control land use development by geographically defining areas for appropriate residential growth and commercial activity. As an outgrowth from the 1976 *La Jolla Community Plan*, the La Jolla Planned District Ordinance was developed for the village, Pearl Street and La Jolla Boulevard Commercial areas.

Along with the adoption of the *La Jolla Community Plan*, residents from La Jolla Shores also wanted to guide residential development and enhance the character of the La Jolla Shores area. Planning Department staff, working along with the La Jolla Shores Association and residents, prepared the *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* which was adopted by the City Council in 1972 and amended in 1976. The *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* identified policies to preserve and protect the residential quality, commercial activity and natural environment of the Shores.

In the 20 years since the development of the *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan*, many of its goals and land use recommendations have been implemented. The Precise Plan recommended preserving the predominantly single dwelling unit character of La Jolla Shores and limiting the proliferation of multiple dwelling units to designated areas. The Precise Plan also recommended preserving the retail uses within the commercial center along Avenida de la Playa in order to maintain the center's economic vitality and pedestrian orientation. Another accomplishment from the Precise Plan has been the protection of the area's parks and open space, such as the dedication of Pottery Canyon and Cliffridge Park, in order to maintain their use for future generations to enjoy.

The *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* has also given rise to the development of other land use planning documents within the Shores area. The *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* was the

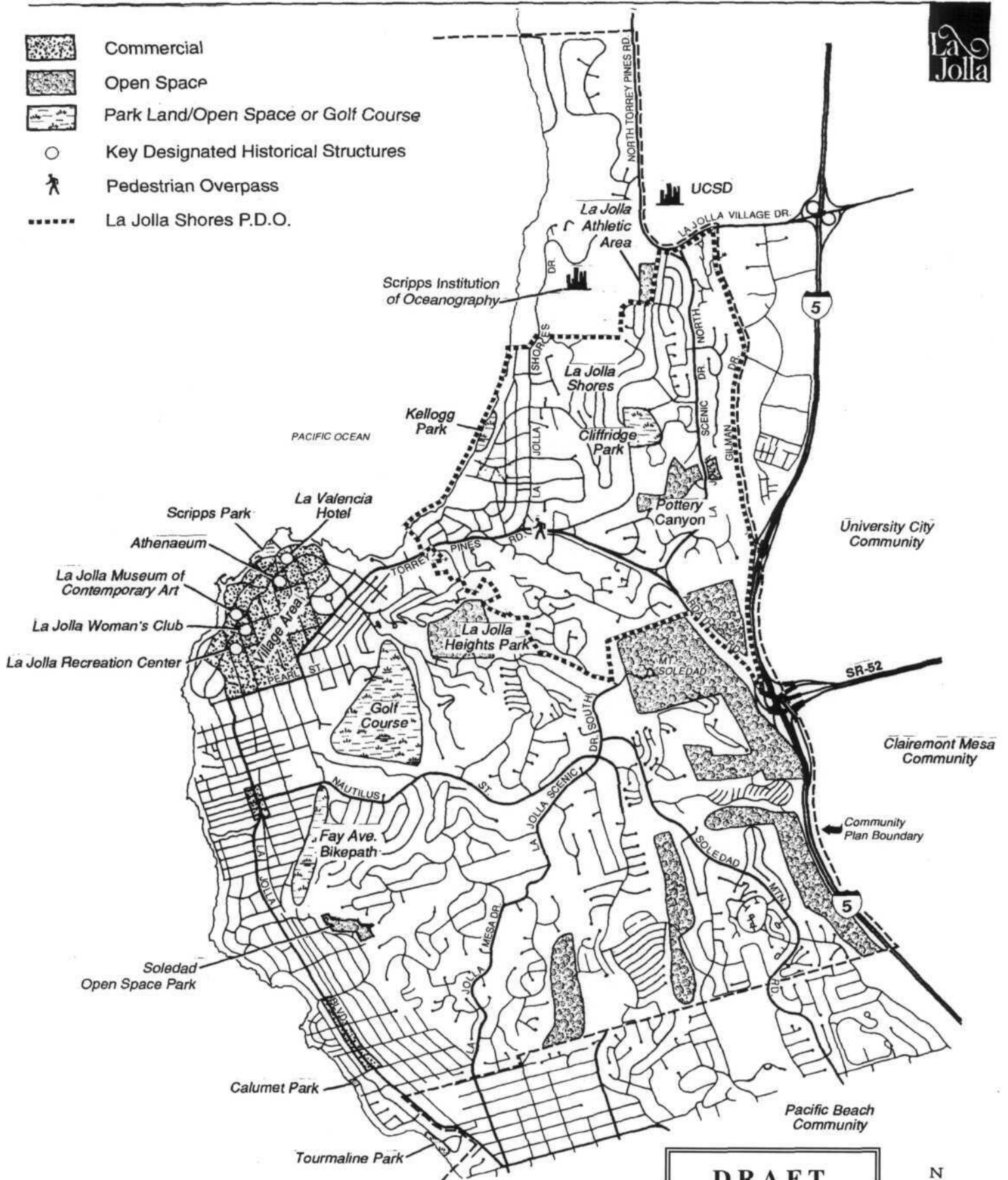
foundation for developing the *La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance*, (see Figure 3) (LJSPDO) which became a part of the San Diego Land Development Code in 1974. The LJSPDO created the La Jolla Shores Planned District Advisory Board which provides a public forum for reviewing projects developed under the Planned District Ordinance. Another implementing ordinance that has come out of the *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* is the La Jolla-La Jolla Shores Sign Control Ordinance, adopted in 1973, which regulates signage within commercial areas in both La Jolla and La Jolla Shores.

In 1995, an update to the community plan was approved by the City Council and became effective in the areas outside the Coastal Zone.

The updated *La Jolla Community Plan* has evaluated the goals, policies and recommendations that were identified in all of the planning documents affecting the community. These documents included, but were not limited to the following: the *La Jolla Community Plan* (adopted in 1967, amended in 1976 and 1988, and in effect in the Coastal Zone), the *La Jolla Shores Precise Plan* (adopted in 1972 and in effect in the Coastal Zone), the *La Jolla-La Jolla Shores Local Coastal Program* (adopted in 1982, and certified in 1983), the *Fay Avenue Plan* (adopted in 1980) and the *La Jolla Community Plan* (adopted in 1995 for areas outside the Coastal Zone only). It is the intention of this plan to synthesize the policies and recommendations from these documents into one community plan for all of La Jolla.

In addition, the goals and policies of the City of Villages concept of the Draft Strategic Framework Element of the *Progress Guide and General Plan* were evaluated and taken into consideration.

-  Commercial
-  Open Space
-  Park Land/Open Space or Golf Course
-  Key Designated Historical Structures
-  Pedestrian Overpass
-  La Jolla Shores P.D.O.



## Image Inventory



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Figure 3

## PLAN FRAMEWORK

The urban and environmental influences that shape the land use of La Jolla include its sensitive hillsides, ocean, beaches and coastal bluffs, geological hazards and heritage resources. These influences serve as the framework for future development in the community.

### Environmental Setting

#### **Hillsides**

Much of the La Jolla Community Planning Area is characterized by densely vegetated and environmentally sensitive slopes and hillsides containing various species of biological resources such as coastal sage and chaparral. In general, hillsides of 25 percent or greater slope are protected from excessive development by the City's Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations for both residential and commercial areas. The purpose of these regulations is to provide supplemental development regulations to the underlying zone to assure that development occurs in a manner that protects the natural and topographical character of these areas and limits any potential impacts on the community's natural resources and environment.

Areas that are protected by the Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations include the publicly-owned slopes of Mount Soledad, portions of the eastern slopes of the Fay Avenue right-of-way and La Jolla Heights Park. The Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations have also been applied to privately-owned

property throughout the community to protect those slopes from excessive grading and disturbance. Figure 4 identifies the general location of the hillside review areas for La Jolla.

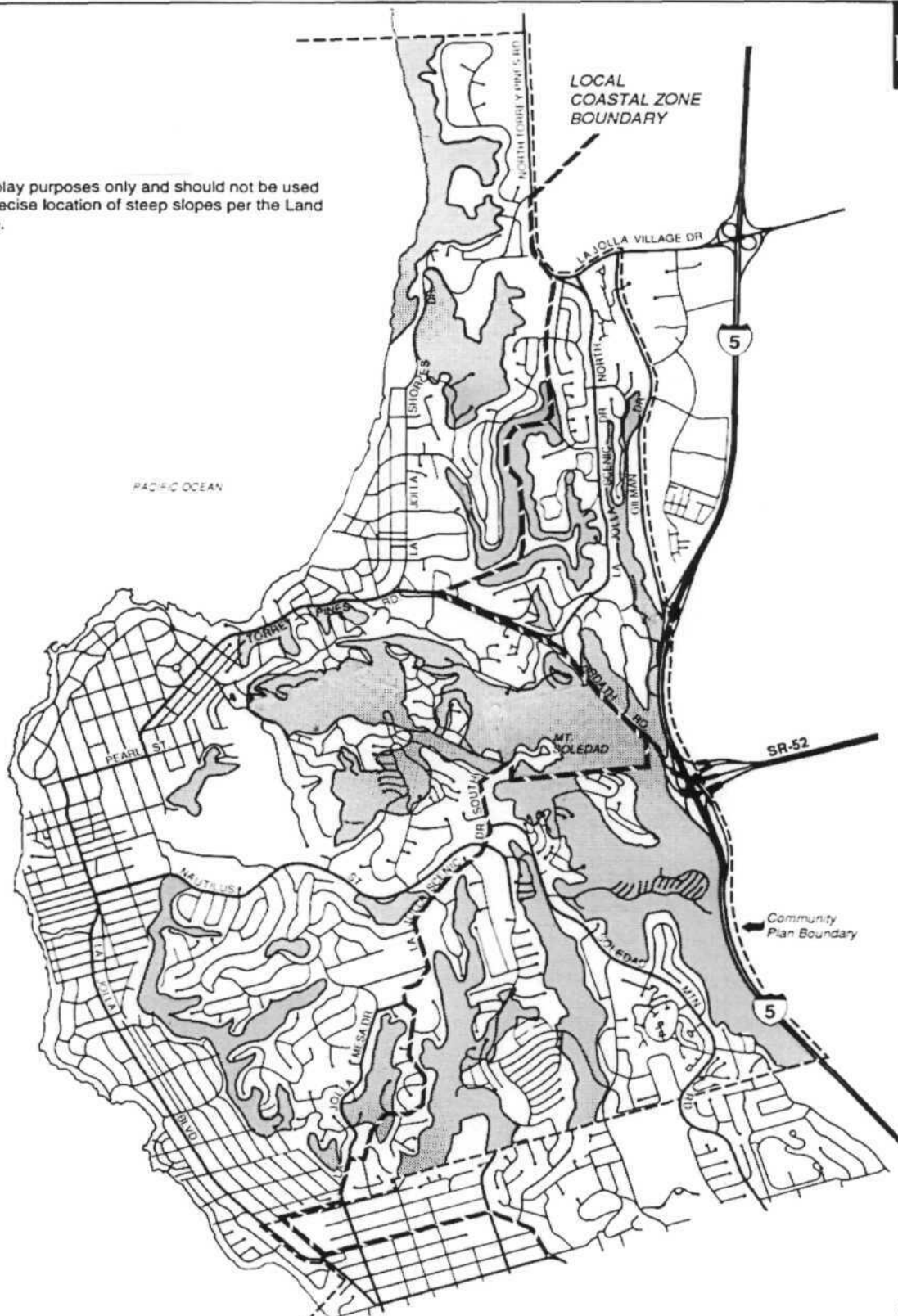
#### **Coastal Bluffs**

The coastal bluffs are one of La Jolla's most scenic natural resources. La Jolla's bluff areas stretch from La Jolla Farms south to Tourmaline Surfing Park. The magnificent views of the ocean and shoreline from these coastal bluffs provide a tremendous development incentive. The Sensitive Coastal Overlay Zone identifies where special development regulations for the environmentally sensitive areas of the shoreline and coastal bluff tops are located. The purpose of this zone and applicable regulations is to help protect and enhance the quality of sensitive coastal bluffs, coastal beaches and wetlands. Further intentions of this overlay zone are to maximize public access to and along the shoreline consistent with sound resource conservation principles and the rights of property owners.

The existing land uses along the bluffs consist of single dwelling unit homes and City parks. Based on the information from *The City of San Diego Seismic Safety Study*, (updated 1995) the shoreline bluffs located along La Jolla Farms are considered less stable than the bluff edges located south of Windansea Beach, which, are considered to be "moderately stable."



This map is for display purposes only and should not be used to determine the precise location of steep slopes per the Land Development Code.



## Hillsides with 25% Slopes or Greater



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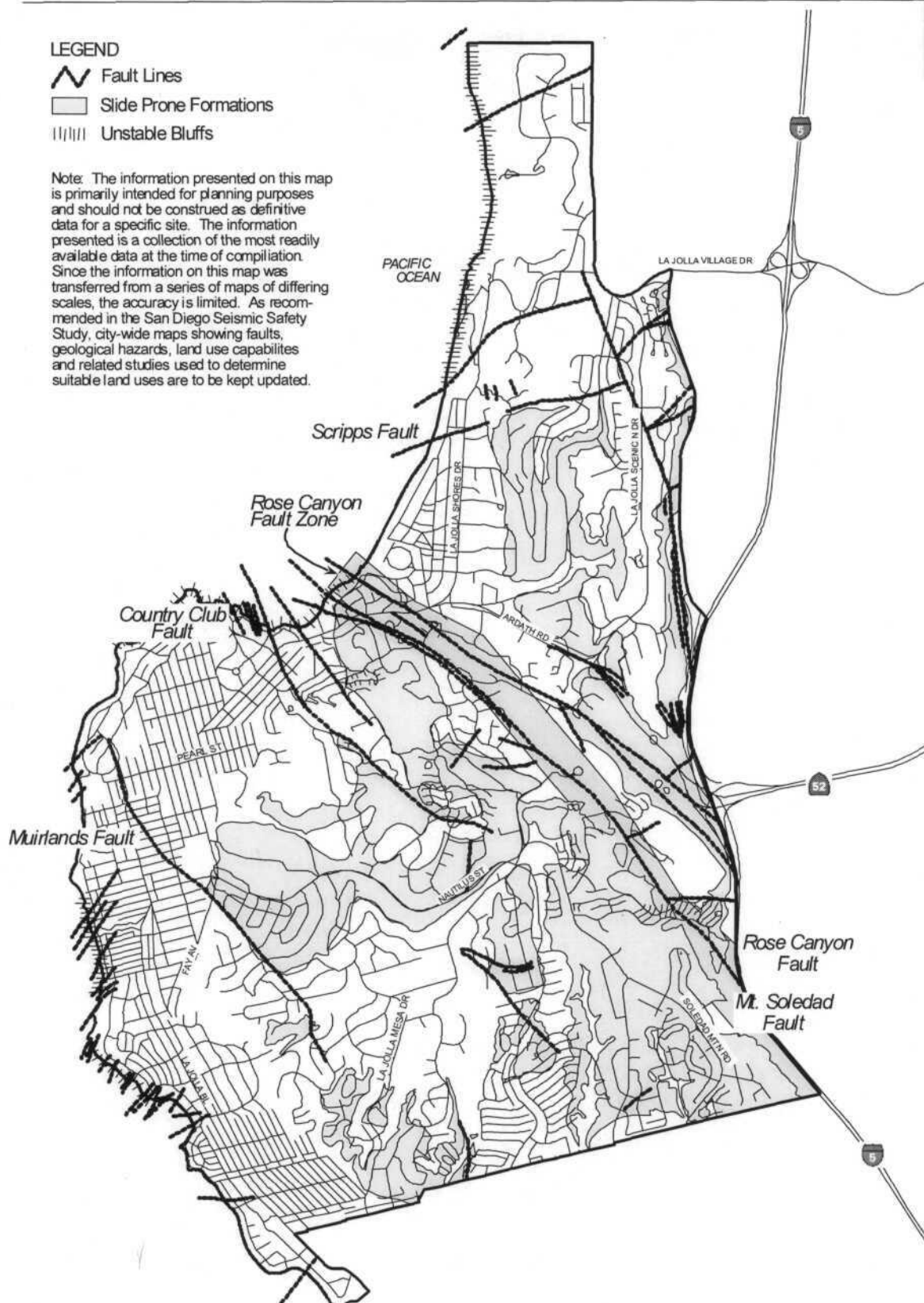
Figure 4

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# LEGEND

- Fault Lines
- Slide Prone Formations
- Unstable Bluffs

Note: The information presented on this map is primarily intended for planning purposes and should not be construed as definitive data for a specific site. The information presented is a collection of the most readily available data at the time of compilation. Since the information on this map was transferred from a series of maps of differing scales, the accuracy is limited. As recommended in the San Diego Seismic Safety Study, city-wide maps showing faults, geological hazards, land use capabilities and related studies used to determine suitable land uses are to be kept updated.



## Geological Fault and Hazard Areas

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Figure 5

## Geological Hazards

*The City of San Diego Seismic Safety Study* (1995) identified active and inactive geological faults that are located within La Jolla. The faults that are classified as potentially active include the Scripps Fault, the Mount Soledad Fault, the Muirlands Fault and the Country Club Fault. All of these inactive faults run in a northwest to southeast direction and have a "moderate" geotechnical risk rating.

The Rose Canyon Fault is identified in *The City of San Diego Seismic Safety Study* as active due to its recorded pattern of earthquake activity and seismic movement. The geological activity along the Rose Canyon Fault has shaped much of La Jolla's coastline including the jagged edges of La Jolla Cove.

According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, the Rose Canyon Fault extends northwesterly along Ardath Road and then moves westerly towards the Pacific Ocean. Residential projects that are proposed within this zone are required to undergo a comprehensive geotechnical analysis and geological report, prior to the City issuing building permits, to determine the extent to which construction is possible. The general location of the active and potentially active faults and other geologic hazards are identified on Figure 5.

## Heritage Resources

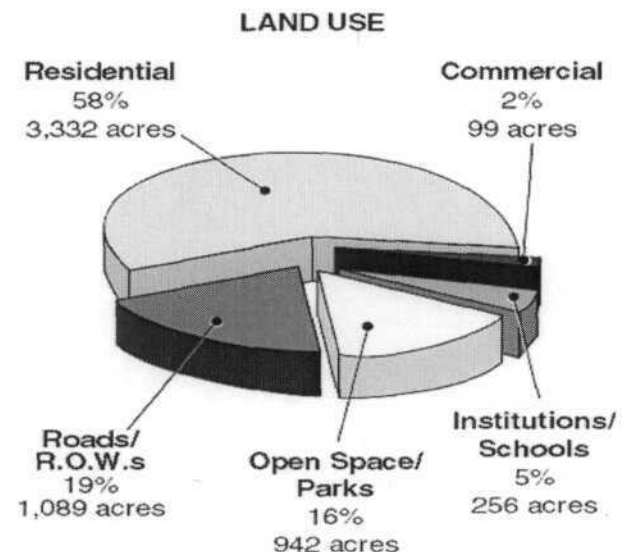
La Jolla's historic structures and resources are important community landmarks that convey a sense of history, identity and place to residents of the community. Some of the historic structures that were built prior to 1930, such as the Athenaeum (built in 1921) and the Shepherd Building (built in 1927), both of which are located on Wall Street in the village area, are examples of historically designated sites that are still in active use.

Historically designated structures, like the ones identified above, contribute to the charm and character of the village area and have helped establish an overall architectural theme and a sense of neighborhood scale within this area. Figure 21 identifies sites and structures that have been formally registered as historic by the City's Historical Resources Board.

A survey to identify potentially historic structures is currently underway. Historic surveys should be updated on a periodic basis per the Secretary of Interior's Standards to encourage the conservation of historic resources.

## Urban Setting

Approximately 99 percent of the land designated for development in La Jolla has been built upon. With the exception of a few scattered lots in the village area and some isolated parcels in the residential areas of the community, most of the future development activity in La Jolla is expected to focus on commercial and mixed-use redevelopment and the redevelopment of existing single dwelling unit homes.



Within the boundary of La Jolla Shores identified in Figure 18, over 97 percent of the area is designated residential and about 3 percent is designated for commercial use.

The circulation system in La Jolla has, for the most part, been well established with few changes for several years now, as the 1976 *La Jolla Community Plan* discouraged street improvements that would accommodate more vehicles entering into and exiting from the community.

Due to the steep terrain, access into the community is limited primarily to Ardath Road from the east, Torrey Pines Road from the north and La Jolla Boulevard and Soledad Mountain Road from the south. Ardath Road is the only street that provides direct access into the community from Interstate 5 northbound.

This community plan update does not recommend additional road widenings that would disrupt the community character of La Jolla. Instead, circulation improvements focus on improving bikeways and public transit, in part through the promotion of transit-oriented-development standards for new development.

## **LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM**

The California Coastal Act of 1976 established a Coastal Zone boundary within which certain planning and development requirements must be met in order to protect and preserve the state's coastal resources. Over 70 percent of the La Jolla community lies within the boundary of the Coastal Zone, as identified in Figure 6. The *La Jolla-La Jolla Shores Local Coastal Program*, which was adopted by the San Diego City Council in 1982 and certified by the California Coastal Commission in 1983, identified standards needed to protect the community coastal resources. The policies and recommendations of the 1983 *La Jolla-La Jolla*

*Shores Local Coastal Program* have been incorporated into this community plan.

The following Local Coastal Program issues have been identified:

- **Special Community**

The California Coastal Act has designated La Jolla as a "special community" of regional and state-wide significance. This designation is embodied in all land use policies and plan recommendations contained in this plan. This designation emphasizes the importance of La Jolla as a prime visitor destination and has been used as the basis for the approval of special grants to conserve and enhance the special character of La Jolla.

This plan presents the coastal issues that have been identified for the community; it proposes policies and recommendations in the various elements of the community plan to address those issues. These issues are summarized below:

- **Public Access to the Beaches and Coastline**

The Natural Resources and Open Space System Element recommends a comprehensive sign program to identify existing locations along the coast where public access to the shoreline exists; Figure 6, 9 and Appendix G identifies the existing coastline access points from La Jolla Farms to Tourmaline Surfing Park; and the Transportation System Element incorporates recommendations for improving bicycle access to Ellen B. Scripps Park and La Jolla Shores Beach and other public shoreline areas of La Jolla.

The plan also states that the City will review new developments for the potential of prescriptive rights of access in accordance with the California Coastal Act and state law.

- **Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**

The Natural Resources and Open Space System and Residential Elements recommend that development be designed to prevent significant impacts upon sensitive habitats and identified endangered or threatened plant and animal species.

- **Recreation and Visitor Serving Retail Areas**

The Commercial Land Use Element recommends retention of existing hotel, retail and visitor-oriented commercial areas in proximity to the beach and coastline parks in order to maintain a high degree of pedestrian activity and access to coastal resources.

- **Preservation or Conservation of Historic Resources**

The Heritage Resources Element recommends preserving the historical integrity of these community landmarks and archeological sites per the Secretary of Interior's Standards as well as maintaining the existing Cultural Complex within downtown La Jolla in order to retain the distinctive architectural, educational and historic heritage of the community.

- **Provision of Parks and Recreation Areas**

The Community Facilities Element recommends the preservation of existing resource and population-based parks and the identification of additional park and recreation opportunities throughout the community.

- **Provision of Affordable Housing**

The Residential and Commercial Elements recommend the revision of the multiple dwelling unit density bonus to allow additional density in order to encourage the development of more affordable housing units.

- **Coastal Bluff, Hillside Development and Preservation**

The Residential and Natural Resources and Open Space System Elements and Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations include standards for coastal bluff development which require that development along bluff tops locate and design all roof and area drains to flow away from the bluff so that they either drain towards the street or are directed into drainage facilities with energy dissipating devices, to prevent bluff erosion.

The Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations are intended to preserve natural steep slopes and the natural vegetation and habitat areas that are located on many of La Jolla's natural steep slopes.

- **Nonpoint Source Pollution Runoff**

The Community Facilities, Parks and Services Element contains references to the City of San Diego's ongoing management measures to identify, prevent and control nonpoint source pollution. This citywide issue will be addressed in the *Progress Guide and General Plan* and City ordinances will be amended to comply with the Municipal Stormwater Permit to ensure the preservation of local water resources for future generations.

- **Seismic Risk Areas**

The Residential Element recommends a geological reconnaissance report in all residential areas in La Jolla where structures are proposed to be located over the trace of an active earthquake fault.

- **Impact of Buildout on Residential Development**

The land uses designated in the various elements of this plan reflect the intensity of existing development, although some redevelopment potential exists within areas designated for mixed-use development.

- **Visual Resources**

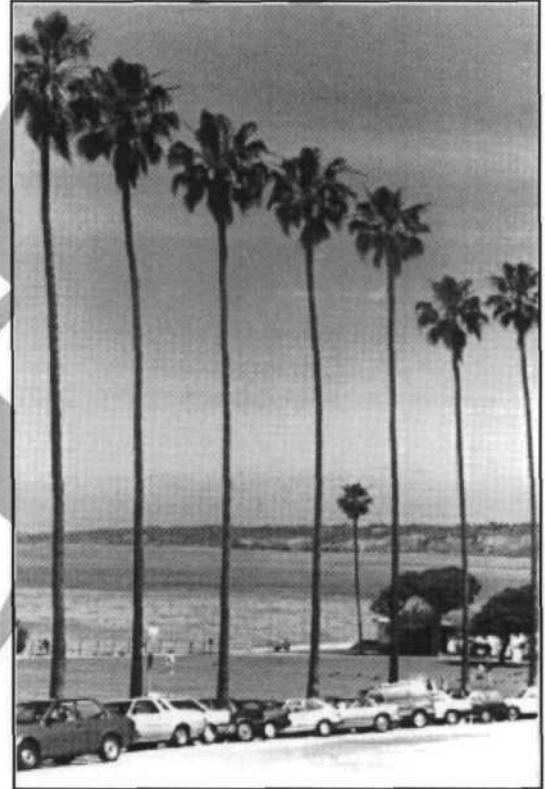
The Natural Resources and Open Space System Element recommends the preservation of public views from public vantage points within the community as identified in Figure 9 and the undergrounding of overhead utility lines; other elements in this plan contain recommendations for the improved signage of existing public access areas; Appendix E also contains streetscape guidelines that are designed to improve the visual quality of La Jolla.

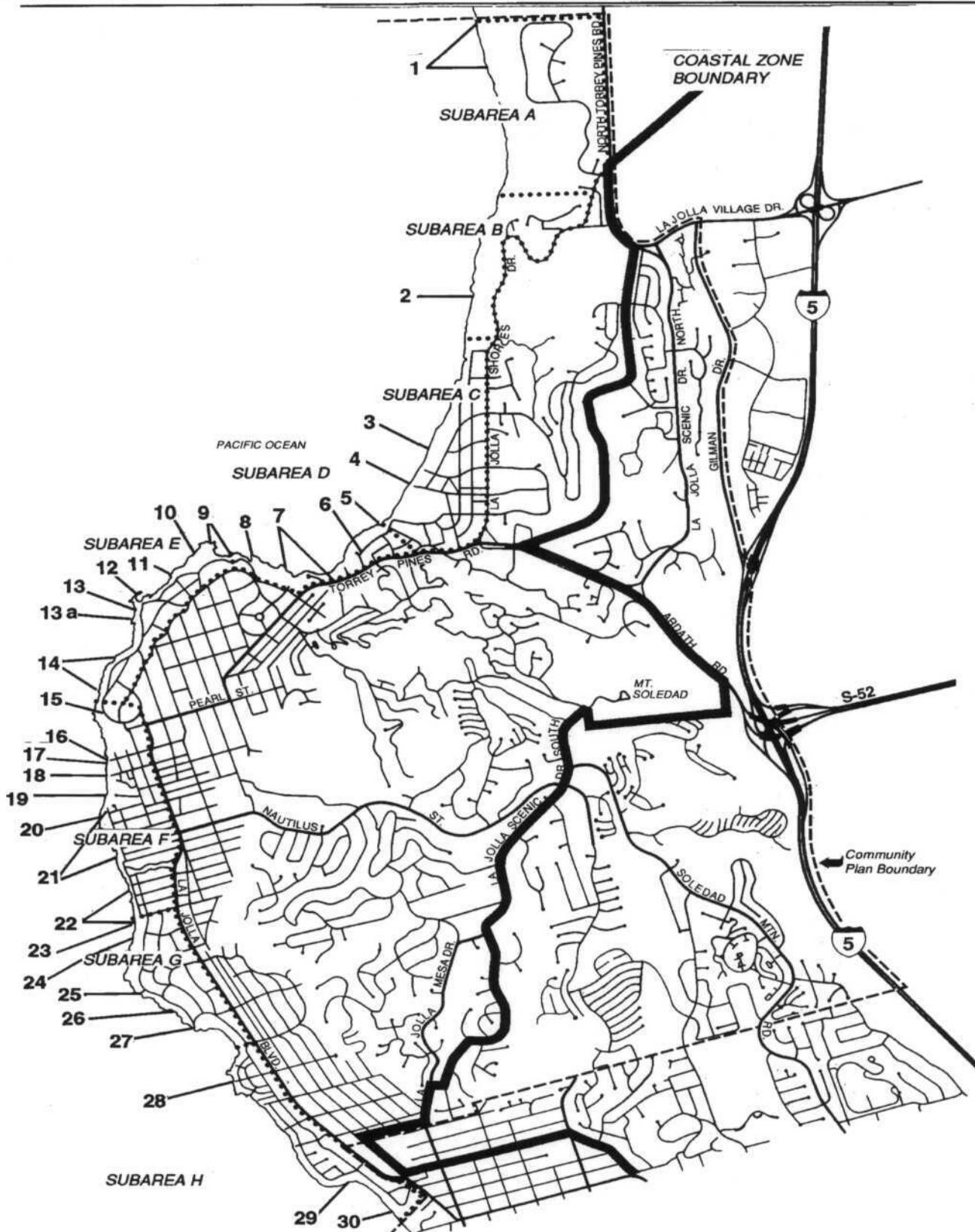
- **Public Works**

The Community Facilities Element contains recommendations for future water, sewage, gas and electric service to La Jolla.

- **Facilitating Public Access**

The policies and recommendations contained in this plan are intended to balance the rights of individual property owners with the public's right of access. Access easements required as a condition of City development approvals should be based on an overall plan of access needs for the community as identified in Figure 6. Dedicated access easements are not required to be opened for public use unless the City or some other entity agrees to accept responsibility for maintenance and liability of that accessway.





## Physical Access & Subarea Boundaries



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**Figure 6**

**PHYSICAL ACCESS POINTS: (\*dedicated)**

1. Torrey Pines City Beach -U.C.S.D. access road off La Jolla Farms Rd. and trail south of glider port
2. Scripps Institution of Oceanography (public parking & stairs)
3. Kellogg Park-La Jolla Shores Beach\*
4. Boat launching ramp at Avenida de la Playa
5. Walk at south end of the Marine Room restaurant
6. Princess Street (emergency access)
7. Scenic overlook from Coast Walk off of Torrey Pines Road (public parking, lateral access)
8. Cave Store access to Goldfish Point
9. La Jolla Cove -Ellen B. Scripps Park \*
10. Coast Boulevard Park: Boomer Beach
11. Coast Boulevard Park: Shell Beach
12. Coast Boulevard Park: Children's Pool
13. Coast Boulevard Park: South Casa Beach
- 13a. Coast Boulevard Park: Wipe-out Beach
14. Nicholson's Point Park
15. Dedicated walkway at 100 Coast Boulevard South\*
16. Stairway at the end of Marine Street (Jones Beach)
17. Paved walk at end of Vista Del Mar; heavily used for beach access\*
18. Street at the end of Sea Lane
19. Walk at the end of Vista de la Playa
20. Fern Glen at Neptune Place
21. Windansea Shoreline Park at the west end of Fern Glen, Belvedere, Westbourne, Nautilus & Bonair Streets\*
22. La Jolla Strand Shoreline Park at the West End of Gravilla, Kolmar, Rosemont Streets, and Palomar Avenue\*
23. Hermosa Terrace Shoreline Park at west end of Palomar Avenue\*
24. Paved easement between 6406 and 6424 Camino de la Costa
25. Cortez Place between 6160 and 6204 Camino de la Costa
26. Mira Monte Place between 6040 and 6102 Camino de la Costa -unimproved street
27. Paved stairs and walk at the end of the 5900 block of Camino de la Costa
28. Stairway from Bird Rock Avenue to tide pools
29. Pathway and stairs extending to the shore from Linda Way
30. Tourmaline Park\*

## **COASTAL ACCESS SUBAREAS**

The shoreline of La Jolla provides recreational opportunities of regional and state-wide significance. A need exists to facilitate access into the Coastal Zone from areas outside of La Jolla. A key component of adequate access is the maintenance of existing facilities including stairways, pathways, and parking areas. Accessways within or adjacent to dedicated City parks are maintained by various City Departments.

Coastal access areas are divided into eight subareas as proposed in the subarea recommendations. New accessway improvements could include stairways, railings, benches, trash receptacles, landscaping, walkways, and bicycle racks. The Coastal Conservancy should be considered as a potential funding source for all accessway improvements. Where feasible, California Conservation Corps labor should be utilized. The development of all accessway improvements will be coordinated with the City's Park and Recreation Department and other appropriate agencies.

Another important component of coastal access is the provision of adequate sign. A comprehensive sign program is needed throughout La Jolla to identify existing but underutilized access points, both at the accessway entrances and at strategic points on major streets.

### **Subarea A - La Jolla Farms**

Public access to the coastal bluff and Scripps (La Jolla Farms Knoll) Natural Reserve is available through pedestrian trails and open space easements that are located along La Jolla Farms Road and Black Gold Road. Below the coastal bluffs, unrestricted public access is available along the beach area from Box Canyon to Sumner Canyon. Spectacular vistas of the ocean and shoreline can be seen

from the pedestrian trails that lead down to the beach, to Box Canyon and to the Natural Reserve (see Appendix G, Figure A).

### **Subarea B - Scripps**

Unrestricted public access is permitted along the shoreline from El Paseo Grande to Scripps Pier. During high tides, public access is restricted to the shoreline areas south of the Pier. Vertical access is available by three stairways that link the walkways of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography to the shore. Vehicular access to the coastline area is limited to curb side parking along La Jolla Shores Drive and El Paseo Grande. Magnificent views of the coastline, Scripps Pier and the entire subarea can be seen from La Jolla Shores Drive (see Appendix G, Figure B).

### **Subarea C - La Jolla Shores**

Public access to the shore is available via La Jolla Shores Beach which occupies the entire length of this subarea. The beach front shoreline of the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club, below the mean high tide line, also provides public access along the coast. Vertical access to the shore is available at Calle Opima at El Paseo Grande and along the south side of the Marine Room Restaurant between Spindrift Drive and the beach. Public parking is available adjacent to the beach at Kellogg Park (see Appendix G, Figure C).

### **Subarea D - Coast Walk**

Within the Coast Walk Subarea, locations where public access to the coastline is permitted are limited due to the steep and jagged patterns of the bluffs. Six public parking spaces are available on Coast Walk off of Torrey Pines that allow visual access of the coast and bluff. Below the bluffs, public access is hazardous because of the

unstable rock formations and tide changes. North of Princess Street, public access is available, but limited along the shore. Coast Walk trail, which begins at Goldfish Point (near Cave Street) and continues along the bluff edge past Devil's Slide, provides scenic public views of the ocean and coastline (see Appendix G, Figure D).

#### **Subarea E - Coast Boulevard**

Views of the shore can be seen from the pedestrian walkway along the bluff top from Ellen B. Scripps Park to the end of Coast Boulevard Park. From this walkway, several stairs and trails lead down to Wipeout Beach, Shell Beach, the Children's Pool area, and South Casa Beach. Below the bluffs, lateral access along the shoreline is limited. Prospect Street and Coast Boulevard are the major streets that provide vehicular access to the coastline; public parking is limited to Coast Boulevard and adjacent local streets (see Appendix G, Figure E). Potential future parking facility sites in this area are identified in Appendix K. If constructed, these facilities would serve to mitigate the currently limited public parking.

#### **Subarea F - Windansea**

Public access to the shore is available at several major locations including Windansea Beach, Nicholson Point Beach, (a.k.a. Whale View Point) Jones Beach, and Marine Street Beach as well as a number of private open space easements.

Between Jones Beach and Windansea Park, public access along the shore is unrestricted, however, south of Windansea Park, high tides and hazardous rock formations restrict pedestrian movement along the coast. All of the local streets, from Ravina Street to Palomar Avenue, provide visual access corridors to the ocean and shoreline where lateral bluff top access is available. Public parking is limited to a few curb side spaces along Neptune Place (see Appendix G, Figure F).

#### **Subarea G - La Jolla Hermosa**

High tides and hazardous bluffs limit public access to and along the shoreline. Near the south end of Hermosa Terrace Park, a paved walkway provides the only access to the coastline. Visual access of the coast is available from Camino de la Costa, Mira Monte Place and Cortez Place (see Appendix G, Figure G).

#### **Subarea H - Bird Rock**

Public access to the coast is available at Bird Rock Avenue, Linda Way and Tourmaline Surfing Park. Lateral access along the shoreline is hazardous. Unobstructed public view areas include Forward Street, Moss Lane and Midway Street. Additional views of the ocean are available from the bluff top area of Calumet Park. Public parking is available at Tourmaline Surfing Park (see Appendix G, Figure H).

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